

An annotated checklist by 2 authors with a uniquely wide personal knowledge of one of the least known African countries and its 639 species, of which the authors have astonishingly seen all but 5. Museum material has not been examined, but sub-specific names are used where appropriate. The literature has been comprehensively reviewed, but only 36 references are included in this work — the authors hope to publish a complete bibliography in the future.

The introductory 7 pages only briefly cover topography, climate, habitats, sources, status and distribution. The checklist is “modelled on *The Birds of East Africa*” (Ed. P. L. Britton, 1980), but the annotations are very brief, and the distribution for each species is only enumerated in quadrants of $\frac{1}{2}^\circ$ grid squares. Breeding distribution is included but without dates. There is only one map, of the grid squares.

The authors are to be congratulated on providing a new source of information on Somalia's avifauna, however incomplete, and a most useful addition to the avian literature of Africa.

Moore, Alick. 1983 (published May 1984). *A Field Guide to the Warblers of Britain and Europe*. Pp. 145. Illustrated in colour (32 plates) and black-and-white by Bryon Wright. Distribution maps. Oxford University Press. £9.50 (hard covers). 210 x 140 mm.

Each of 53 species (of which 39 breed) is illustrated in colour and line drawing. The text includes a plumage description applicable to a detailed view in the field, field and differential characteristics, description of the song, and a distribution map for Europe and North Africa (in almost all cases). There is a brief set of references. The short introductory “Importance and discipline of identification” of this difficult group of Old World warblers is apt and includes a useful questionnaire to apply to each fleeting sighting of an unknown warbler, which is creditably intended to diminish the number of facile identifications after only brief glimpses — how successfully will depend on practical use of the book in the field.

Ali, Salim & Ripley, S. D. 1983 (published June 1984). *Handbook of the Birds of India and Pakistan. Compact Edition*. Pp. 737. 113 full page colour plates, black-and-white drawings, distribution maps, etc. Oxford University Press, Delhi. £45. 320 x 220 mm.

The complete text and line drawings (and the appendices for Vols 1-4) of the 2nd edition of Vols 1-3 and of the 1st edition of Vols 4-10 of the *Handbook* reproduced photographically in a reduced form, so that at 70% of its original size, 4 pages (including their pagination) are contained on one. Page headings conveniently indicate the volume and relevant page numbers. It is important to note that the size magnifications given below each drawing have not been altered (as a warning in the introduction states), but are 3 tenths smaller than quoted. The colour plates are original size, 24 of them new, replacing most of those taken from Smythies' *Birds of Burma*. The Introduction and indices relevant to the whole work and the Eclectic Bibliography from Vol 10 are included. The text, which is easily readable at least for the purpose of reference despite its small size, is unaltered, but some captions include taxonomic changes which have occurred since the first edition.

The publishers state that difficulties during the manufacturing process have affected the quality of the book, so that the price is £45 instead of the previously announced £75. Despite some below standard plates, and the small print, the reduced price for such an immense comprehensive work of reference of such importance is by no means excessive and the experiment in miniaturisation can be considered a success.

IN BRIEF

Descriptions of the eggs of two lories previously undescribed

Mrs Rosemary Low recently presented some parrot eggs to the British Museum (Natural History). Of these, the eggs of 2 species, laid in captivity, appear to be previously undescribed in the literature:

Trichoglossus iris Iris lorikeet. One egg 23.5 x 19.5 mm, ovoid-spherical, white and not glossy. Registered no 1984.4.1

Trichoglossus goldiei Goldie's lorikeet. Two eggs 21.85 x 18.7 and 21.65 x 18.7 mm, almost spherical, white, and not glossy. Registered no 1984.4.2-3.

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